

*The Succession of SOLOMON to the
Throne of DAVID:*

693.d. 5

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Consider'd in a

S E R M O N

On the Occasion of the

Sudden D E A T H

O F

King G E O R G E I.

June 18, 1727.

By *T H O M A S B R A D B U R T.*

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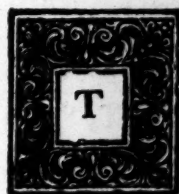


T O

His most Excellent Majesty

King GEORGE II.

S I R,



THE great concern and surprize that fill'd *Your Majesty* upon the sudden death of *Your Royal Father*, has, I believe, diffus'd it self over all the nation. That this work of God might be improved to the most useful and religious ends, was the only thing I had in view at the preaching of this sermon; in which I gave my self no scope at all, either for admiration of the dead, or flattery to the living. Tho' I thought

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DEDICATION.

there were some particulars in the story of *David* and *Solomon* that might easily be transfer'd to the late and present happiness of our country, yet I would rather leave every one to see the parallel with his own eyes, than do any thing that appear'd like a prostitution of the ministry to mean and servile ends. The many virtues, wars, designs and conquests of the late king, are better deliver'd in a regular history, than hurried into a pulpit, and made part of our worship to the most high God.

It has been no little comfort, under the shock of this awful providence, to see your Majesty so prepar'd to fill the throne, with a love to this nation, a regard to our peace, an early sense of the great trust devolv'd upon You, and a resolution to make the laws of the land Your rule, as they are our protection.

'Tis no more than a piece of justice that the city of *London* has paid
to

DEDICATION.

to your Majesty, to remember on this occasion of Your being *King*, what monuments we have of conduct and vigour, when you acted over us as *Regent*. To the course of law against a number of *rioters* then, do we owe the security of our persons and houses ever since. A resolution to punish those, who thought they might go on to assault and plunder at random, struck an awe upon the sons of violence. May You still be a healer of our breaches, and a restorer of paths to dwell in.

Every one who had a relish of our late establishment, sees his duty to Your Majesty, and waits for his protection from You. We all regard You as the undoubted heir to our affection, homage, and esteem. The loyalty that was due to our late Sovereign, we now give to its rightful owner: And as we have long admir'd Your integrity, goodness and temper in a private life, we are oblig'd to
beg,

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beg, that the God who has made You more *publick*, would give all the qualifications that are proper to one who fills a throne. That, as in Your Majesty we had the best example of *obedience*, so we may now see all the virtues of a *Sovereign*, in the same person who abounded in those of a *Subject*.

It has been my lot to be distinguished by the wrath of man several years ago, for my zeal to the *Protestant succession*; and I am now under an equal run of malice and falshood, for a much better cause than that of any prince upon earth, the eternal deity and personality of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, the one only living and true God. The liberty some have taken to deny, pervert, and revile the doctrine of our common salvation, that all the *Protestants*, nay, all the Christians in the world have own'd, has brought in envy, strife, confusion, and every evil work. Nor can I cease
to

DEDICATION.

to fear, that men, who dare to be self-condemn'd by subscribing what they don't believe, on purpose to lie warm in their great preferments, have made such a breach in conscience, as will open the way to all hypocrisy. For, if deceit and *mental reservation* is allow'd in a profession of *faith*, it will soon pollute our oaths to a government, and make people, both in church and state, tell lies in the name of the Lord.

But my heart's desire for your Majesty is, that Your eyes may be ever upon the faithful of the land ; that Your person and counsels may be deliver'd from men of treachery and corruption ; that peace may be within our walls, and prosperity in our palaces. That your Royal Consort may be long continued as a partner in the glories of a happy reign, and every branch of Your great family be the delight and blessing of this nation. That the *Protestant* faith may have
in

DEDICATION.

in Your Majesty a true *defender*; and that liberty in Your days may be a thing pure and undefiled; that You may, thro' a course of many prosperous years, wear the crown of these kingdoms, and never change it for any other than a crown of glory, that fades not away. These are the wishes and prayers of,

May it please Your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most devoted

and loyal subject,

Most obedient and faithful servant,

Thomas Bradbury.

THE



I CHRON. xvii. II.

It shall come to pass when thy days be expired, that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and I will establish his kingdom.



HE reading of these words will strike every hearer among you with the great providence that fix'd my thoughts upon them.

We are shock'd with an event that gave no warning, but came as a mighty rushing wind, all on a sudden. The most high God does these *terrible things that* II. lxiv. 3. *we looked not for*, that our hearts may stand in awe of him, and be convinc'd, that he will have no rival in our dependence. *Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help,*

B

his

his breath goes forth, he returns to his earth, and that every day his thoughts perish :
 Psal. cxlvi. *Happy is he who has the God of Jacob*
 45. *for his help, and whose hope is in the Lord his God.* When he sounds the trumpet, the people ought to hear and tremble ; and that we may both know his will, and see his goodness, I would offer to your thoughts what has lain with some warmth and weight upon mine ; and that is, a gracious promise upon the death of a king who had been endear'd and honour'd both by God and man. *It shall come to pass when thy days are expir'd, &c.*

These words are part of an answer which *Nathan* the prophet brought to *David* from the Lord his God ; and it relates to the building of a temple : the design is first commended, and then discharged. *'Tis well*, saith he to him, *that it was in thine heart* ; but how came it there ? Was that pompous work only a human invention, a thing of man, or by man ? No, we are not sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves ; all the imaginations of the thoughts in the heart of man are only evil, and that continually. It is the doctrine of Scripture and experience too, that God works in us, to will as well as to do of his own good pleasure. Every good gift, tho' it be not perfect, is from above, and comes from the Father of lights.

There

There are four things in this message to *David* concerning his design to build the temple; 'twas approv'd, refus'd, promoted, and secur'd.

1. 'Tis approv'd; as flowing from a zeal to religion. Whilst there is any obscurity upon God's glory, he seems to grudge the possession of his own; he thinks the latter too much when the former is so little, *Behold I dwell in a house of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the Lord remains under curtains.* This way of reasoning was so generous, divine and grateful, that *Nathan* makes no doubt whence it came, and whither it tended, *Do all that is in thy heart for God is with thee.* Nevertheless

1 Chron.
xvii. 1, 2.

2. 'Tis refus'd. *David* shall not do the thing that his soul was wrapt into, because he had been a man of wars, and had shed much blood upon the earth. We see the perpetuity of that maxim, *If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man has, and not according to what he has not.* However

2 Cor. viii.
12.

3. It shall be promoted. *David*, who was not to have the full reputation, provides for it abundantly before his death. All the spoils of battle were brought into the grand dedication, as an emblem, that the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. He is affected with it, and says,

1 Chron.
xxix. 2.
xviii. 11.
Psal. xxiv.

B 2

with

1 Chron.
xxix. 14,
16.

with praise and wonder, all things come of thee; and *of thine own have we given thee.* O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name, comes of thine hand, and is all thine own.

Act. ii. 30.
1 Kin. viii.
11.

2 Sam.
vii. 12,
13.

4. 'Tis secur'd. A design that sprung up in the heart of *David*, shall be the care of his son and the honour of his family; till of the fruit of his loins, the great anointed came to fill the house with the glory of his person, which he open'd at once with the glory of a cloud. This he is told in the words of my text; *It shall come to pass when thy days are expir'd, that thou must go to be [to sleep] with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons [proceed out of thy bowels] and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.*

Here are two things,

1. A declaration of what *David* knew from the light of nature, that he should die. But how soft and easy are the words, on purpose to take off the horror of the thing? his days are to *expire* or be *fulfilled*; he shall have his share of time, his portion of life; not be cut off by violence, tho' he had been so much expos'd to it. God would bring him to a good old age; he

he shall decay and wear out by a gradual
expenditure of nature; till the days of *Da-
vid* drew nigh, that he should die, as it
had been said of *Jacob* and *Joshua*.

1 Kin. ii.
1.
Gen. xlvii.
29.
Josh. xiii.
1.

Dying was going to *be*, or to *sleep* with
his fathers; to the common rest that re-
mains for the people of God. His day and
work were to end together, and so they
did, as the Apostle says, *David, after he
had serv'd his own generation by the will
of God, fell on sleep, and was laid to his
fathers*. These were people that feared
the Lord, who walked with him and were
gone to him. He spake with a particular
affection to the faith that was in his mo-
ther, and talks in the strain of a covenant,
Remember the son of thine hand-maid. His
great grandmother was *Ruth* the *Moa-
bites*s, who left her father and mother, and
the land of her nativity, and came to a
people whom she knew not heretofore.
The Lord recompensed her work, and a
full reward was given her of the Lord
God of *Israel*, under whose wings she came
to trust. He was descended from *Boaz*,
who did worthily in *Ephrath*, and was
famous in *Bethlehem*; from *Salmon* and
Nahshon, princes of the tribe of *Judah*,
who thro' faith had subdued kingdoms and
obtain'd promises. These all died in faith;
David came from them, and acted in the
hope of going to them; that what he had

Acts xiii.
36.

Psal. cxvi.
16.
Ruth ii.
11, 12.

Ruth iv.
11.

Heb. xi.
35.

Jude 4.
Jer. vi.
16.
Eph. i. 10.

done after them he might do with them. Good men are following one another in profession and practice ; in the same doctrines of faith once deliver'd to the saints ; and the same holiness, those good old paths that gave rest to their souls. And in the dispensation of the fulness of times Christ will gather all into one, both in heaven and earth.

2. Here's an account of something that is meer revelation, *I will raise up of thy seed after thee, and I will establish his kingdom.* So that, here are two things in the course of *David's* empire that are said to be of God. First, the beginning of it, and that was by a revolution ; and secondly, the continuance of it by a succession.

1. The hand of God appear'd with power and glory in the great *revolution* that brought *David* to the throne. He rolled away the reproach of *Israel* by disowning *Saul*, and at last overwhelming him in the fruit of his iniquity. This is always mentioned as a thing conducted by the wheel of providence. Thus God tells *David* in this chapter, *I took thee from the sheepfold, that thou shouldst be ruler over my people Israel ; and I have been with thee whithersoever thou hast walked, and have cut off thine enemies from before thee, and have made thee a name like the name of the great men*

Ver. 7, 8.

men that are in the earth. The Lord sought ^{1 Sam. xiii. 14.} him out a man after his own heart; and when he had been trained up in wars and troubles, in the field, the court and the wilderness, he turn'd the eyes and the souls of the people to him, and made him captain over the tribes of his inheritance, the many thousands of *Israel*. This King's accession was so eminently the work of God, that it is brought in as a type of the greatest appointment that was ever establish'd in heaven, or reveal'd upon earth, and that is of the Lord Jesus to a mediation between God and man. *Thou spakest* ^{Pf. lxxix. 19, 20.} *in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help on one that is mighty: I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.*

2. 'Twas also the work of the Lord to continue the cause and blessing of this revolution in a lineal *Succession*. So that the historical truth arising from this prophetic text, you may take in the following

Doctrine. God declared his power and love in making the throne of *David* hereditary to his family, which he had made elective and prosperous to himself.

The method of proceeding upon this subject shall be

I. To

I. To shew you what there appear'd of God in the succession of *Solomon* to the throne of *David*.

II. Who this GOD was that put his name upon that dispensation.

III. Why he would be owned is his regard to that family, and for what reasons the story is so often thrown up by the holy Spirit quite thro' the Bible.

I. What is there in the succession of *Solomon* to the throne of *David* that appear'd to be the doing of the Lord? In answer to this question, I shall give you what I find in Scripture, and most of the particulars appear to be good ingredients in the happiness of any other government.

1. This is what God refus'd to *Saul* and his family.

2. 'Tis what *David* had a great deal of reason to doubt of.

3. He knew there would be much opposition to it.

4. The disorders in his own house would make it difficult and improbable. Yet

5. God prepar'd the way for it, by letting *David* who had liv'd in so many wars die in full and quiet peace.

6. He

6. He inclined the hearts of the people to it.

7. He fitted and qualified *Solomon* for it. This promise to *David* was so far a peculiar, that no family had it before; and it is but gross and dull flattery to transfer it upon any since; yet when there is a resemblance or similitude of characters, such a providence is a blessing to the people, and ought to be matter of many thanksgivings to God.

I shall do little more than give you the history as I find it, and leave the application or parallel to every man's conscience. If the change in our government is so prepar'd, so easy, so accepted, so full of duty, we may say, happy are the people that are in such a case, and blessed is that nation whose God is their Lord. Psal. cxliv.
15.

1. This succession or lineal empire in *David's* family is what had been refused to *Saul*. He was the Lord's anointed, chose in both by God and man, and upon his accession, had another heart given him for business, war and conduct; but his acting deceitfully in the covenant of the Lord, his ungodly moderation to *Amalek*, his cruelty to the priests, his barbarity to *David*, his injustice to the *Gibeonites*; and at last his running to a familiar spirit, shew'd the connexion there was between his rebellion and the sin of witchcraft; he 1 Sam. x.
9.
xiii. 13.
xv. 9.
xxii. 26.
xxiii. 26.
2 Sam.
xxi. 1, 2.
1 Chron.
x. 13.
1 Sam. xv.
23.

rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord rejected him from being king over *Israel*.

His son was a person who fear'd the Lord, and the father prepar'd a scheme of making the empire sure to him, and that was the murder of *David*; for, as he argues, as long as the son of *Jesse* lives thy kingdom shall not be established to thee. But political reasons are seldom any more than *fleshly wisdom*; and the less there is of the grace of God in them, the more will his wrath be levell'd against them. His devices were like chaff before the wind, as *Samuel* told him they would be: the Lord has rent the kingdom of *Israel* from thee, and given it to a neighbour of thine that is better than thee; also the strength of *Israel* will not lie nor repent, for he is not a man that he should repent.

But the promise to *David* is in different language, *I will not take away my mercy from thee, as I took it from him whom I put away before thee.* Well might the good man be transported, when the Lord had created a *new* thing in the earth. *What am I, and what is my father's house that thou hast brought me hitherto? and yet this was a small thing in thine eyes, O God; for thou hast also spoken of thy servant's house for a great while to come, and regarded me according to the estate* of

of a man of high degree, O Lord God.

2. *David* had many reasons to doubt of this succession; 'tis what nothing but a divine promise could enter upon his imagination. He knew there was a lurking disaffection in some of the tribes. They had all along shewn a great inclination to be divided into two kingdoms. At the time when *Saul* was chosen, the people were number'd, and the children of *Israel* were three hundred thousand, and the men of *Judah* thirty thousand. The ten tribes hung off for some time at the revolution, till *Abner* brought them over. And tho' after *Absalom's* death, the men of *Israel* said they had *ten* parts in *David*, yet during the rebellion he had not *one* among them. When *Sheba* the son of *Bichri* blew the trumpet, the revolvers began with the same cry that their posterity reviv'd above forty years after under *Feroboam* the son of *Nebat*, what portion have we in *David*? and what inheritance in the son of *Jesse*? every man to your tents, O *Israel*. *Shimei* the son of *Gera* took occasion to let out the rancour that had been long within him, and rejoiced in *David's* adversity; upon all which he could not but fear that a proper occasion would set these passions a working. But his whole dependence is upon the promise of God. Let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant,

1 Sam. xi.

2.

2 Sam. ii. 9.

iii. 9, 10.

xix. 13.

xx. 1.

1 Kin. xii.

13.

2 Sam.

xvi. 5, 6.

Psal. xxxv.

15.

1 Chro.

xvii. 24.

servant, that it may continue for ever before thee. For thou, O Lord God, hast spoken, and with thy blessing let the house of thy servant be-blessed for ever. This is what the good man sets in ballance to all his fears, that if the cause is of God it will stand; His omnipotence, goodness and veracity are pillars of faith, that shall never tremble.

Gen.
xxvii. 41.

Tit. iii. 3.
Eph. ii. 2.

1 Kin. ii.
32.

3. He foresaw that the succession promised would be much oppos'd. 'Tis very usual for little petty factions to gather head upon the death of any eminent person. *Esau* contain'd himself during the life of *Isaac*, but his beloved imagination was this; the days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I surely slay my brother *Jacob*. *David* knew the corruption of human nature; and this is far from being incapable of finding its way into courts; it makes men live in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. He had seen many of those about his person who fill'd the desires of the flesh and of the mind. *Joab* the son of *Zeruiah* had been faithful to him; nevertheless revenge and pride were the springs of all his life, and they work'd out at last to his ruin. He had been stain'd with two private murders, shedding the blood of war in peace; and as the guilt of this hung upon him, so God left him to the cursed ambition within.

in. The old root of bitterness spring up after many years ; for 'tis observ'd, that tho' he follow'd not *Absalom*; yet he turned aside after *Adonijah*, and so his hoary hairs came down to the grave with blood.

David in his last words tells them of a covenant order'd in all things and sure, but yet he owns that the sons of *Belial* are like thorns, that cannot be taken with hands; the man that touches them must be fenc'd with iron, and the staff of a spear; however, he ventures to say, they shall be burnt with fire in the same place. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7.

4. *David* knew the disorders in his own family would make the succession very difficult. He complain'd often in the bitterness of his soul, that *his house was not so with God*; and even under the joys of an everlasting covenant, he did not expect that God would make it to grow. He had reason enough to think this from a black and cloudy threatening that hung over him; the sword shall not depart from thine house. 2 Sam. xii. 10. He liv'd to see and feel some leading drops of that horrible tempest that was to be the portion of his cup. He is put to flight, not by the *Philistines*, or any of the house of *Saul*, but by a darling son. His children were his pride, and God made them a scourge. xvi. 11. We read of *Adonijah* that he was a very goodly person, neither had his father displeas'd him at any time, in saying, 1 Kin. i. 6.

ing, why hast thou done so; and his mother bare him next after *Absalom*. The mother of one of these princes was a king's daughter, and the only one (excepting *Michal*, who had no child) that was so royally descended. She was fetch'd from those nations, concerning whom the *Jews* had an express command not to make marriages with them. Both these sons fell in the guilt and vengeance of rebellion. *David* had seen the one, and could not be without his fears of the other. However he prays and sings, and declares mercy shall be built up for ever, because *the faithfulness of God is established in the very heavens*.

2 Sam. iii.
3.
Ps. lxxxix.
2.

5. God prepar'd the way to this succession, by making the last days of the good old king so peaceable and quiet. His wars were ended abroad, the factions all hush'd at home, the alliances form'd, the people easy, as he observes, when he recommended *Solomon* as the man whom the king of heaven had appointed both to fill the throne and to build the house. *Is not the Lord your God with you, and has he not given you rest on every side? for he has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the Lord, and before his people; now therefore set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God.*

1 Chron.
xxii. 18.

He

He had battles with every one of the neighbouring countries. The tabernacles of *Edom*, and the *Ismaelites*, of *Moab*, and the *Hagarenes*; *Gebal*, and *Ammon*, and *Amalek*, the *Philistines*, with the inhabitants of *Tyre*. But the Lord had carried him thro' the whole circle of war, and brought him to a good old age, full of days, and riches, and honour. By the success of his sword was the promise to *Abraham* fulfill'd in all its compass. Till the end of *David's* reign there were some arrears upon it, that they should have the whole country from the river of *Egypt* to the great river the river *Euphrates*. So that *Solomon* succeeded not only to a full but a quiet empire; the Lord his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly.

Ps. lxxxiii.

6, 7.

1 Chron.

xxix. 28.

Gen. xv.

18.

2 Chron.

i. 1.

6. He inclin'd the hearts of the people to this succession. Some took advantage from *David's* old age to set it aside; and among these were *Adonijah* the first prince of the blood, *Joab* the general of the army, and *Abiathar* the high priest, men of great figure and reputation. This must be after *Solomon* had been recommended from the throne, and indeed admitted as a partner upon it; for when *David* was old and full of days, he made *Solomon* his son king over *Israel*. Nevertheless these malecontents thought they had weight enough to

1 Kin. i. 7.

1 Chron.

xxiii. 1.

Rev. i. 15.
1 Kin. i.
47.

to carry their point; but the event lets us see the counsel of the Lord shall stand; when he declares his purpose in the shouts of a willing people, his voice is as the sound of many waters. The story is told by one of the faction, that all the king's servants came to bless *David*; not from any weariness of his administration, but with a joy in the successor he had named; saying, God make the name of *Solomon* better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. *Zadak* withdrew himself from the faction which *Abiathar* follow'd, and anointed *Solomon* with an horn of oil taken out of the tabernacle; and upon the proclamation, the people shouted with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them. 'Twas not a want of love to *David's* person or his memory, but rather the abundance of it, that made them go to their tents joyful and glad of heart, for all the goodness that the Lord had done to *David* his servant, and to *Israel* his people.

1 Kin. viii.
66.

7. The Lord fitted *Solomon* for the mighty work devolved upon him. He had liv'd hitherto in a very private way; we don't read of his taking any share in the government, till the time that *David* resign'd the administration to him. Those of the king's sons that were chief rulers must be the elder brethren; for when the succession

cession comes to be fix'd, *David* tells them, *Solomon* my son, whom alone God has chosen, is *young and tender*. Nor was the prince himself insensible of this, as appears by his answer at the high place in *Gibeon*; O Lord God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of *David* my father; and I am *but a little child*, I know not how to go out or come in. This one would think might prove a disadvantage to the work, and an offence to the people; but as God had given him a promise, so he made it good. There are four things relating to his qualifications.

1 Chron.
xxix. 1.

1 Kin. iii.
7.

(1.) His father had given both him and the people the best advice that was ever heard, with the greatest solemnity that perhaps was ever seen. Now therefore in the sight of all *Israel*, the congregation of the Lord, and in the audience of our God, keep and seek all the commandments of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. And thou *Solomon*, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever. *David* was then going out

1 Chron.
xxviii. 8,
9.

D

of

1 Kin. ii.
2.

of the world, and should have no portion in any thing done under the sun ; and yet how particular and moving are the directions that he gives, that *Solomon* would be strong and of a good courage, and shew himself a man, to keep the charge of the Lord his God, and walk in his ways ?

He lets him know, that if religion was neglected, all the courses of empire would be embitter'd. Superstition, idolatry, unbelief and atheism seldom fail to bring their load along with them. When either princes or people come to think that they have strength and wisdom, riches and allies that will make them independent on God, a very small turn of providence will shew them their error. Of this *Solomon*, the most learned and wealthy prince that ever liv'd, is an awful monument ; for as his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, like the heart of *David* his father, so the Lord stir'd up adversaries against him, who shook the kingdom in his days, and quite' split it in his son's.

(2.) *David* does not only recommend God to *Solomon*, but recommends *Solomon* to him. 'Twas a great and joyful assembly which he had call'd together for a general contribution to the building of a temple ; and as the princes and the people offer'd willingly to it, so he prays, O Lord
God

God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Israel*, our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the hearts of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee. And then his particular affection for one among them goes out in prayer, and give to *Solomon* my son a perfect heart to keep thy commandments, thy testimonies and thy statutes, and to do all those things, and to build the palace for which I have made provision. If God leaves our kings they will be no blessings to us. 'Tis only from him that they reign and decree justice. Tho' *Solomon* begun with such a glare of fame for wisdom and fulness as the world never heard of, yet his strange wives and his strange gods brought him into strange measures. The people complain of a grievous service, and a heavy yoke; and therefore *David* knew that nothing but a divine presence could be effectual to the great ends of government.

(3.) He begins with a zeal for religion. The chief doctrine which they profess'd was the coming of a *Messiah*; and building him a temple was an earnest of his appearance. We are not to suppose that they acted upon a principle so gross and trifling, as to think that God dwells in temples made with hands; but he put them upon this work to keep up their hopes of an incarnation. For as soon as ever that

1 Chron.
xxix. 18.

Prov. viii.
15.

1 Kin. xii.
4.

Acts xvii.
24.

house was finish'd, he took possession of
 1 Kin. viii. 11. it in a cloud, which is call'd *the glory of the Lord*; and this was an earnest of what
 Mal. iii. 1. he would do in person; as the prophet tells them, the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple. So that *Solomon* in this design shew'd his regard to the
 Acts xiii. 32, 33. great hope of *Israel*, the promise that was
 xxvi. 6. made to their fathers, and would be accomplish'd to their children; the main article of reveal'd religion. When any monarchs are unmindful of *Him*, by whom they reign, he can take those methods that will declare his contempt of them in proportion to theirs of Him. They sin against their Principal, who in his own time will
 1 Tim. vi. 15. shew that he is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. They are exhorted to be wise, not only in pursuing the moral maxims of nature, but
 Psa. ii. ult. falling in with pure revelation. Kiss the SON, *i. e.* worship at his footstool; pay him your homage; let him live in your affection, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.

(4.) He soon appear'd to have those qualifications that he wish'd for. God offer'd
 1 Kin. iii. 5---9. him riches, honour, long life, and absolute empire, which are things that mankind are all always desiring a little more of; but he chooses wisdom, of which others think they have enough. And God gave him largeness

largeness of heart, exceeding much. The first cause that he tried was that of the two harlots, who laid their claim with equal evidence to the living child : the old men who stood before *David* his father, and were ready to pity and relieve his tender years, are amaz'd to hear him talk of dividing the infant ; but when they perceive the fetch that he had in it, and how quickly he touch'd the genuine passions of nature, *they fear'd the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment.* Ver. 16, &c.

The queen of *Sheba* came from the uttermost parts of the earth to ask him questions, and hear his answers; and when she had seen his house, his table, his servants, their attendance and apparel, and his ascent by which he went up to the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit within her. And in delivering the wonder of her soul, she had learn'd to own the great original of all this intellectual glory, *Blessed be the Lord thy God*, who delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of *Israel*, because *the Lord* loved *Israel* for ever, therefore he made thee king, to do judgment and justice. *Hiram* king of *Tyre* expresses himself in the same way, *Blessed be the Lord*, who has given to *David* a wise son over this great people. Tho' both these princes were heathen, yet they saw and ador'd

1 Kin. x.
1, 2.
Ver. 9.
2 Chron.
ii. 11.

ador'd the love that God had bestowed upon his own church and nation. A king so enlarg'd and adorn'd, answer'd the name that was given him at his birth, *Jedidiah* beloved of God. Thus was the hand of the Lord apparent in fixing *Solomon* upon the throne of his father, as well as in bringing *David* to it.

2 Sam. xii.
25.

II. What God is this who gave to *David* the promise in my text, and to *Solomon* the real contents of it? The nations in those parts of the world had every one their God, whom they worship'd with a pre-eminence to all others. In *Judah* was *Jehovah* known, and his name great in *Israel*. The testimony that the people gave to his perfections, was always under these three heads.

Psal. lxxvi.
1.

i. That he was the most High over all the earth; as *David* says in his prayer upon this occasion. *O Lord, there is none like Thee; neither is there any God besides Thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.* *Solomon* was not afraid to say this of him, tho' he found himself thrown into a dependence upon a heathen king; yet he boldly gives this reason why the house must be magnificent, because, says he, our God is great above all Gods. This was telling the nations round about him the most grating story that could be; and putting

1 Chron.
xvii. 20.

2 Chron.
ii. 5.

putting them in mind of what they did not care to hear; that the God of the *Jews* had demolished the idols of *Egypt*, when he brought out his people from among them; that he had thrown shame and dishonour upon those of *Canaan*, when he made that his dwelling place, and the mountain of his inheritance. Tho' he stood in a particular relation to that people, yet he was the creator of the ends of the earth, who had made of one blood all nations of men, and fashion'd their hearts alike.

Exod. xv.

17.

Is. xl. 28.

Act. xvii.

26.

Ps. xxxiii.

15.

2. This God appear'd to their fathers, as *David* observes, *What one nation in the earth is like thy people Israel*, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatness and terror, by driving out nations from before them? for thy people *Israel* didst thou make to be thine own people for ever, and thou, Lord, becamest their God. He shew'd himself to *Abraham* in visions and voices; he was known to *Jacob* as the God of *Bethel*, the angel, the man who wrestled with him. He came down to *Moses* in a burning bush; to all the people in a pillar of cloud and fire. He was seen face to face by *Moses*, and in a lower degree by seventy of the elders; *they saw the God of Israel*, and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and

Ver. 21.

Gen. xv.

1.

xvii. 1.

xxviii. 13.

xxxi. 13.

xxxii. 24.

Exod. iii.

2.

xiii. 21.

xxiv. 10.

11.

Josh. v.
15.

Prov. viii.
31.

Joh. i. 14.
Gal. iv. 4.
1 Tim. iii.
16.

Act. ii. 25.

Rev. xxii.
16.

Act. ii. 30.

and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness; and upon the nobles of the children of *Israel* he laid not his hand; also *they saw God* and did eat and drink. He appear'd to *Joshua* as the captain of the host with *a drawn sword in his hand*. In this visible way he conducted their armies, and encourag'd their prophets. The person who thus reveal'd himself to them they worship'd as their God; and can the whole account that is given us of these manifestations be applied to any other, but Him who rejoic'd in the habitable parts of the earth, and had his delights with the sons of men? tho' the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are each of them known by the individual name of *Jehovah*, yet He, who shew'd himself so familiar there, did it upon a design of closer communion *.

3. 'Tis he who in the fulness of Time should be made flesh, and dwell among them. God was to be manifest in the flesh. This is the Lord whom *David* set always before him. He consider'd him in a two-fold relation, as the root and the offspring. He speaks of him as his son, as the Apostle says, *David* being a prophet, knew that

* That the God of *Israel* was never any other than the supreme Being; and yet that this title is usually to be understood of Christ, I have proved at large in ten sermons, and in three fifth of *November* sermons, 1724, 1725, 1726, call'd, *The Charge of God to Gideon*.

God would of the fruit of his loins raise up Christ to sit on his throne; and yet *in the spirit he calls him Lord.* And tho' these things were confounding to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, yet he that is least in the kingdom of heaven knows how to distinguish between a divine and a human nature, in the person of a Redeemer. He came into a world that was made by him, to a nation who were his own; he acted in the temple as a proprietor with authority and power. *Abraham* rejoic'd to see his day, which he never did in the flesh; and to him all the following prophets gave witness as a horn of salvation in the house of *David*. He was then known in *Sion* for a refuge; and afterwards for a sacrifice. He sways the courses of nature; he holds the reins of providence. Which leads me to consider

III. Why he is so often own'd in his relation to *David's* family; not only as an efficient of the *revolution*, but as a guardian of the *succession*. *Solomon* takes notice, that it was God who *establish'd* him and set him on the throne of *David* his father, and made him a house.

1. Negatively. This was not from any merit in *David*, and much less in several of that royal race who descended from him. As he says, who am I? and what is my father's house? It might with more wonder be said, what are his posterity, that

E

from

Matth.

xxii. 43.

Joh. i. 10,

11.

ii. 15.

viii. 56.

Luk. i. 69,

70.

Act. iii.

24.

Ps. xlviii.

3.

Heb. i. 3.

1 KIn. ii.

24.

1 Chron.

xvii. 16.

from them the great Redeemer of the world should come? Many of them were as bad as the kings of *Israel*. *Akaz* was no better than *Ahab*, *Jehoiachim* than *Jeroboam*. Nay, *Solomon* himself was contriving a fellowship between the temple of God and idols; and for that did providence begin very early to afflict the house of *David*. The glory of *Judah* was made thin by revolts and famines, wars and plagues, till at last he gave his strength into captivity, and the house his glory into the enemies hands. The tabernacle of *David* fell; God seem'd to make void the covenant of his servant, and profan'd his crown to the ground; so that it was pure mercy that he would not quite extinguish the family; he remember'd his covenant with *David*, and ordain'd a lamp for his anointed.

2. The reasons of this great love to *David* may be all summ'd up in the mystery of godliness, that *of him* as concerning the flesh Christ was to come, who is over all God, blessed for ever.

(1.) In this line the prophecy of good old *Jacob* was accomplish'd; that the sceptre should not depart from *Judah*, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till *Shiloh* came. I think *Othniel* was the only person among the judges rais'd out of that tribe, till *David's* time, and then the decree brought forth. He refus'd the tabernacle

1 Kin. xi.

7.

2 Cor. vi.

16.

Isa. xvii.

4.

Psal.

lxxxix. 39.

40.

xxxii. 17.

Rom. ix.

5.

Gen. xlix.

10.

Jud. iii. 9.

nacle of *Joseph*; and chose not the tribe of *Ephraim*. *Josbua* was of this tribe, whose name and office made him a type of *Jesus*; and yet that was not to be the channel of salvation; but he chose the tribe of *Judah*, the mount *Sion* which he loved.

Psal.
lxxviii. 67,
68.

(2.) *Solomon* himself, both in this and other prophecies, is set up as a figure of Christ. What God saith in the following verse, I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son, is applied to our blessed Lord. He was the first who sate upon the throne of *David* to execute judgment and justice; he possess'd it in all its glory; and had such a compass of empire, such a fulness of wisdom, as never man enjoy'd either before or since. This was an emblem of what Christ should have and do, not in a way of external pomp, but in *the demonstration of the spirit and power*. The fulness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily. He sends the rod of his strength out of *Sion*, whereby his people are made willing. *Solomon* sings of him under his own name, as *David* did before, which could never have been done, either with truth or modesty, were it not that God design'd to keep the great salvation in perpetual honour; and therefore he concerns himself about an empire that was to be the figure of his own.

Heb. i. 5.

Col. ii. 9.
Psal. cx.
2, 3.

Cant. iii.
9.
Psal. lxxii.
1.

(3.) In this character, as the son of *David*, he has a right to manage all the world.

Isa. ix. 6. world. The child that's born, the son
 7. that's given, is the prince of peace, *he has
 the government upon his shoulders*, and he
 sits upon the throne of *David*. This au-
 thority is partly a reward of his sufferings;
 lii. 15. he who was the servant of rulers is to
 Psal. xxii. 28. sprinkle many nations, for the kingdom
 shall be the Lord's; and partly a security
 to the happiness of a chosen people. He
 Joh. xvii. 2, 3. has power over all flesh, that he may give
 eternal life; this is to be by the preaching
 of the gospel; for life eternal is to know
 the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom
 1 Tim. ii. 2. he has sent. By his blessing on a good
 king we lead quiet and peaceable lives, in
 all godliness and honesty; and sometimes
 by the persecution of a bad one, he scourges
 his churches, blows off the chaff, and sweeps
 away the bran. And when he has sanctified
 Isa. x. 5. the rod of tyranny, he lays it aside, striking
 Psal. cx. 5. thro' kings in the day of his wrath. This
 was the purchase of his death, and is num-
 ber'd among the glories of his resurrection.
 Rev. i. 5. He is the faithful Witness, the first Begotten
 from the dead, the Prince of the kings of the
 earth. Upon him our eyes ought to be fix'd,
 as the supreme cause of every blessing that
 Psal. cxlix. 2. we either have or want. Let *Israel* rejoice in
 him that made him, and the children of *Sion*
 lxvii. 17. be joyful in their King. His name shall en-
 dure for ever, and be continu'd as long as
 the sun. Men shall be bless'd in him, and
 all nations shall call him blessed.

F I N I S.